

## Amebiasis (*Entamoeba histolytica*)

### 1990 Case Definition

The 1990 case definition appearing on this page was re-published in the 1997 MMWR Recommendations and Reports titled Case Definitions for Infectious Conditions Under Public Health Surveillance [MMWR 1997; 46(RR10)] (available at <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/00047449.htm>). Thus, the 1990 and 1997 versions of the case definition are identical.

### Clinical Description

Infection of the large intestine by *Entamoeba histolytica* may result in an illness of variable severity ranging from mild, chronic diarrhea to fulminant dysentery. Infection also may be asymptomatic. Extraintestinal infection also can occur (e.g., hepatic abscess).

### Laboratory Criteria for Diagnosis

#### Intestinal Amebiasis

- Demonstration of cysts or trophozoites of *E. histolytica* in stool or
- Demonstration of trophozoites in tissue biopsy or ulcer scrapings by culture or histopathology

#### Extraintestinal Amebiasis

- Demonstration of *E. histolytica* trophozoites in extraintestinal tissue

### Case Classification

Confirmed, intestinal amebiasis: a clinically compatible illness that is laboratory confirmed

Confirmed, extraintestinal amebiasis: a parasitologically confirmed infection of extraintestinal tissue, or among symptomatic persons (with clinical or radiographic findings consistent with extraintestinal infection), demonstration of specific antibody against *E. histolytica* as measured by indirect hemagglutination or other reliable immunodiagnostic test (e.g., enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay)

### Comment

Asymptomatic intestinal carriage of *E. histolytica* should not be reported. Among asymptomatic persons, a positive serologic test does not necessarily indicate extraintestinal amebiasis.